

Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation  
Water Resources Division  
Water Rights Bureau

**ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**  
**For Routine Actions with Limited Environmental Impact**

**Part I. Proposed Action Description**

1. *Applicant/Contact name and address:* Michael G. & Pamela K. Mower, PO Box 8234, Kalispell MT 59901
2. *Type of action:* Application for Beneficial Water Use Permit 30015142-76LJ
3. *Water source name:* Groundwater from a drilled well.
4. *Location affected by action:* SE NE of Section 33, T 29N, R 22W, Flathead County.
5. *Narrative summary of the proposed project, purpose, action to be taken, and benefits:*  
The DNRC shall issue a water use permit if an applicant proves the criteria in 85-2-311, MCA are met. The applicants are seeking an irrigation permit from a 340 foot drilled well. The well will be pumped at a rate of up to 500 gpm and used to irrigate 96 acres with a center pivot, wheel move and hand line sprinkler systems.
6. *Agencies consulted during preparation of the Environmental Assessment:* MT Natural Heritage Program, State Historic Preservation Office and the MT Dept of FW&P website.  
(include agencies with overlapping jurisdiction)

**Part II. Environmental Review**

**1. Environmental Impact Checklist:**

**PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT**

**WATER QUANTITY, QUALITY AND DISTRIBUTION**

**Water quantity** - Assess whether the source of supply is identified as a chronically or periodically dewatered stream by DFWP. Assess whether the proposed use will worsen the already dewatered condition.

*Determination: The source is groundwater from the deep, artesian aquifer.*

**Water quality** - Assess whether the stream is listed as water quality impaired or threatened by DEQ, and whether the proposed project will affect water quality.

*Determination: This is from groundwater.*

**Groundwater** - Assess if the proposed project impacts ground water quality or supply.  
*If this is a groundwater appropriation, assess if it could impact adjacent surface water flows.*

*Determination: Testing has been conducted and this system has been operational for at least two years.*

**DIVERSION WORKS** - Assess whether the means of diversion, construction and operation of the appropriation works of the proposed project will impact any of the following: channel impacts, flow modifications, barriers, riparian areas, dams, well construction.

*Determination: This well was drilled in April of 2004 and the system has been operational for at least two years.*

#### **UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE OR LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES**

**Endangered and threatened species** - Assess whether the proposed project will impact any threatened or endangered fish, wildlife, plants or aquatic species or any "species of special concern," or create a barrier to the migration or movement of fish or wildlife. For groundwater, assess whether the proposed project, including impacts on adjacent surface flows, would impact any threatened or endangered species or "species of special concern."

*Determination: No impacts*

**Wetlands** - Consult and assess whether the apparent wetland is a functional wetland (according to COE definitions), and whether the wetland resource would be impacted.

*Determination: No impacts*

**Ponds** - For ponds, consult and assess whether existing wildlife, waterfowl, or fisheries resources would be impacted.

*Determination: No impacts*

**GEOLOGY/SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE** - Assess whether there will be degradation of soil quality, alteration of soil stability, or moisture content. Assess whether the soils are heavy in salts that could cause saline seep.

*Determination: No change since the system was constructed and put into operation.*

**VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY/NOXIOUS WEEDS** - Assess impacts to existing vegetative cover. Assess whether the proposed project would result in the establishment or spread of noxious weeds.

*Determination: It is the owner's responsibility to control weeds.*

**AIR QUALITY** - Assess whether there will be a deterioration of air quality or adverse effects on vegetation due to increased air pollutants.

*Determination:* No impacts

**HISTORICAL AND ARCHEOLOGICAL SITES** - Assess whether there will be degradation of unique archeological or historical sites in the vicinity of the proposed project.

*Determination:* Any sites that may have been on the property were removed long ago.

**DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF LAND, WATER, AND ENERGY** - Assess any other impacts on environmental resources of land, water, and energy not already addressed.

*Determination:* None identified.

## **HUMAN ENVIRONMENT**

**LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS** - Assess whether the proposed project is inconsistent with any locally adopted environmental plans and goals.

*Determination:* This property is still in agricultural production.

**ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF RECREATIONAL AND WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES** - Assess whether the proposed project will impact access to or the quality of recreational and wilderness activities.

*Determination:* No impacts.

**HUMAN HEALTH** - Assess whether the proposed project impacts on human health.

*Determination:* No impacts

**PRIVATE PROPERTY** - Assess whether there are any government regulatory impacts on private property rights.

Yes\_\_\_ No\_X\_. If yes, analyze any alternatives considered that could reduce, minimize, or eliminate the regulation of private property rights.

*Determination:*

**OTHER HUMAN ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES** - For routine actions of limited environmental impact, the following may be addressed in a checklist fashion.

*Impacts on:*

(a) Cultural uniqueness and diversity? None

(b) Local and state tax base and tax revenues? Increase in taxes should have already been realized.

- (c) Existing land uses? The land uses have not changed.
- (d) Quantity and distribution of employment? None
- (e) Distribution and density of population and housing? None
- (f) Demands for government services? Slight
- (g) Industrial and commercial activity? None
- (h) Utilities? Some impacts due to the use of the well pump and center pivot.
- (i) Transportation? None
- (j) Safety? None
- (k) Other appropriate social and economic circumstances? None identified.
2. ***Secondary and cumulative impacts on the physical environment and human population:*** No secondary or cumulative impacts were identified in this EA.
3. ***Describe any mitigation/stipulation measures:*** None are justified at this time.
4. ***Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives to the proposed action, including the no action alternative, if an alternative is reasonably available and prudent to consider:*** The no action alternative would force the landowner to shut off the well and discontinue use of his irrigation system.

### **PART III. Conclusion**

*Based on the significance criteria evaluated in this EA, is an EIS required? No*

*If an EIS is not required, explain why the EA is the appropriate level of analysis for this proposed action: Because no substantial, secondary or cumulative impacts were identified in this EA as a result of this action, the EA is therefore, the appropriate level of analysis for the action.*

*Name of person responsible for preparation of EA:*

*Name:* Wes McAlpin, DNRC Water Resources, Kalispell RO

*Title:* Water Resources Specialist

*Date:* August 2, 2006